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SAC

Central Intelligence Agency

Washington, D.C. 20505

HAND CARRY

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11 March 1983

The Honorable Ted Stevens, Chairman, SAC
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I know that the Committee has a continuing interest in the problems that our Agency and its employees face in carrying out our mission. It is with this thought in mind that I bring to your attention the concerns we have in the rotational assignment of certain of our employees. We have already discussed these concerns with members of your staff.

We are finding it increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified employees for assignment to domestic locations outside of the Washington metropolitan area. High interest rates and inflationary pressures, particularly in the housing market, have created major obstacles to staffing these important jobs. The Agency places extraordinary demands on its employees by requiring them to demonstrate a degree of mobility which permits us to match individual qualifications and expertise to the personnel needs of our organization in both domestic and overseas locations. Many of our unique staffing requirements can only be met by the assignment of specially trained personnel on rotational tours of two to five years. Employees who are being selected for frequent domestic reassignments are finding that the financial burden they must bear is becoming intolerable and unacceptable.

There are a number of factors which contribute to this problem and that make it difficult to develop a comprehensive solution. These factors include: the difficulty in selling a home at the current location; locating and financing housing at the new location; mortgage payment differentials between previously financed and newly financed homes; unreimbursed costs of selling, buying or renting a home; dual career families requiring the spouse to find a position at the new location; varying costs of living in different locations; etc. As inflation pressures increased in recent years the concerns of our employees and managers deepened and required that something be done. When we examined the problems and sought examples, our employees were encouraged that solutions would be forthcoming.

Near the end of 1982 we concluded that a domestic quarters allowance similar to that provided to military personnel could offer significant relief to domestic relocation problems. This plan was discussed in various forums and we were counseled to determine what was being done in other agencies.

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When we contacted the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) we were reminded that a government task force had first been formed in July 1980 to work with OPM and GSA staffs to document problems and explore options in this area. The results of that earlier work are now being used by OPM and GSA to formulate legislative proposals which are expected to be released for comment in the near future.

We believe our concerns are too severe and pressing to wait for completion of the OPM-GSA effort. Therefore, we are continuing our examination of the various alternatives which would help to ameliorate the financial burden imposed on our personnel who are required to relocate for domestic reassignments. When we have evaluated the various solutions to this most serious problem, we will advise you of our conclusions. After consultation with our Congressional committees, we plan to use the Director's special authority to implement the proposal which would best serve to meet our current needs.

Please be assured that we will keep your staff informed of our plans and progress.

Sincerely,

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Executive Director STAT

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